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NC 27516

TOR:080621Z APR 75

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4898

BT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 4450

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE NOTIFY IMMEDIATELY AND PASS TO PAT
HOLT, CHIEF OF STAFF, COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
FROM MOOSE AND MEISSNER.

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP, VS (MOOSE, RICHARD; MEISSNER, CHARLES)

SUBJECT: STAFFDEL MOOSE/MEISSNER

REF: A) STATE 75051, B) STATE 76284

1. FOLLOWING ARE OUR REPLIES TO SENATOR HUMPHREY'S QUESTIONS
CONTAINED REF A, NOT NECESSARILY IN ORDER STATED.

A, GVN LOSSES: THE PRELIMINARY AND PARTIAL OFFICIAL ESTIMATES
OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLY LOSSES ARE AS FOLLOWS:
ARMY \$480 MILLION, AIR FORCE \$176 MILLION, AND THE NAVY APPROXI-
MATELY \$5 MILLION. NOT INCLUDED IN THE FOREGOING ARE LOSSES IN
MILITARY REGIONS 1 AND 2 FOR SERVICE SUPPORT UNITS, FACILITIES,
ENGINEER EQUIPMENT OR SIGNAL FACILITIES. FINAL ESTIMATES WILL
UNDOUBTEDLY BE MUCH HIGHER. AS DEFENSE OFFICIALS POINT OUT,
HOWEVER, NOT ALL THESE LOSSES HAVE TO BE REPLACED.

THE DEFENSE ATTACHE STATES THAT THE VIETNAMESE HAVE ABOUT
42,000 TONS OF AMMUNITION ON HAND AND THAT ANOTHER 12,000 TONS
ARE BEING UNLOADED. OTHER SHIPMENTS ARE EN ROUTE BUT THE CURRENT
CONSUMPTION RATE MAY BE AS HIGH AS 30,000 TONS A MONTH. MANY
OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT AMMUNITION MAY HAVE BEEN SECRETLY
SQUIRRELED AWAY BUT, IF SO, MUCH OF THIS WAS ALSO LOST.

OTHER GROSS EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE COMPLETE SETS OF
EQUIPMENT FOR POSSIBLY SIX NEW DIVISIONS PLANNED TO REPLACE THOSE
LOST IN THE NORTH. PLANS FOR CONSTITUTING THESE UNITS ARE CON-
SIDERED OVERLY OPTIMISTIC BY SOME EXPERIENCED OBSERVERS.

B, EFFECT OF ADDITIONAL AUTHORIZATIONS: AT THIS STAGE IN OUR
VISIT WE ARE DISPOSED TO SHARE THE VIEW OF LOCAL ANALYSTS THAT THE
BALANCE OF FORCES HAS SHIFTED SHARPLY AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT OF
SOUTH VIET-NAM AND THAT THE MILITARY SITUATION IS NOT RETRIEVABLE
FOR THE GOVERNMENT SHORT OF MAJOR U.S. INTERVENTION. THAT IS NOT
TO SAY THAT WE BELIEVE SAIGON IS ABOUT TO FALL. IT IS TOO EARLY
TO KNOW WHAT OPTION HANOI WILL CHOOSE BUT WE ARE LEANING TOWARD

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THE VIEW THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE WILL NOT ATTACK THE CITY DIRECTLY, MORE LIKELY, THEY WILL ATTEMPT TO PRECIPITATE PUBLIC CHAOS REMINISCENT OF DA NANG AND, FAILING IN THAT, TO ISOLATE THE CITY, STRANGLE IT ECONOMICALLY AND DESTROY SOUTH VIET-NAM'S REMAINING FORCES PIECEMEAL. AT THE SAME TIME EFFORTS WILL BE MADE TO DRAW SAIGON INTO RENEWED TALKS BASED ON THE PARIS ACCORDS. WHETHER ADDITIONAL MILITARY ASSISTANCE IS REQUIRED DEPENDS TO A LARGE DEGREE ON WHETHER THE WAR IS TO CONTINUE OR WHETHER THERE WILL BE MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATIONS. SUPPLEMENTAL ASSISTANCE IN 1975 AND ANOTHER MAJOR PROGRAM IN 1976 WOULD CERTAINLY BE REQUIRED FOR THE PURSUIT OF THE WAR.

IN THE LONG TERM EVEN MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF U.S. AID WILL NOT SUFFICE TO REVERSE THE PRESENT MILITARY SITUATION. AT BEST, SUCH AID WOULD KEEP ALIVE A TRUNCATED STATE OF COCHIN CHINA CONTINUALLY DEPENDENT, BOTH PSYCHOLOGICALLY AND MILITARILY, UPON THE UNITED STATES, NO ONE HERE WITH WHOM WE HAVE TALKED BELIEVES THAT SOUTH VIET-NAM, EVEN WITH MASSIVE MILITARY AID, CAN REGAIN ITS LOST TERRITORY.

THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT SAIGON IS THINKING IN TERMS OF SERIOUS POLITICAL COMPROMISE, THE THIEU GOVERNMENT MUST CERTAINLY SEE ITSELF IN TOO WEAK A POSITION TO TALK AND HANOI HAS LITTLE REASON TO COMPROMISE.

C, REFUGEES AND EMERGENCY RICE: THERE IS NO SHORTAGE OF OR REQUIREMENT FOR FOOD OR FUNDS TO CARE FOR THE NEW REFUGEES. FOOD, SUPPLIES AND FUNDS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO MEET CURRENT NEEDS.

REQUEST FOR 100,000 TONS ADDITIONAL TITLE II RICE WAS BASED ON THE ESTIMATED ONE MILLION REFUGEES WHICH HAD BEEN EXPECTED TO MATERIALIZE FROM MILITARY REGIONS I AND II. AS NOTED BELOW, THE NUMBER WHO ACTUALLY ESCAPED IS MUCH SMALLER. THUS, THE EMERGENCY RICE IS NO LONGER NEEDED.

AT PRESENT THE MAJOR PROBLEMS ARE DRINKING WATER AND HOUSING. MATERIALS IN MOST CASES ARE ALREADY AVAILABLE, WHERE THEY ARE NOT, FUNDS CAN BE REPROGRAMMED FROM OTHER REFUGEE ACTIVITIES NO LONGER FEASIBLE BECAUSE OF TERRITORIAL GASSES.

THERE ARE NO FIRM FIGURES ON REFUGEES. BY ROUGH COUNT THERE ARE 410,000 REFUGEES, OF WHICH ABOUT 340,000 ARE NEW SINCE RECENT ACTION. SOME OF THESE WILL BE MILITARY BUT NO ONE KNOWS HOW MANY. EACH DAY BRINGS TO LIGHT 500 TO 1,000 MORE. REFUGEES LOCATED AS FOLLOWS:

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FROM MR II	
CAM RANH BAY	10,000
PHUC QUOC ISLAND	
(A) ON LAND	15,000
(B) ON LARGE BOATS	25,000
(C) ANTICIPATED ARRIVALS	
STILL AT SEA	50,000
TOTAL	100,000

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4899
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SAIGON 4450
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HOLT, CHIEF OF STAFF, COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
FROM MOOSE AND MEISSNER.

FROM MR III:

HAM TAN	180,000
PHAN RANG	30,000
PHAN THIET	5,000
TOTAL	215,000

FROM MR IIII:

BIEN HOA	20,000
ALREADY IN CAMPS IN MR IV (BEFORE RECENT ACTIVITY)	
OLD KHMER REFUGEES	25,000
OLD REFUGEES	50,000
TOTAL	75,000

OVERALL FOOD SITUATION IS GOOD. MR III AND RM IV ARE RICE
SURPLUS AREAS. SAIGON HAS SIX MONTHS TO ONE YEAR SUPPLY OF
RICE. EXPECT THAT NORTH VIETNAMESE WILL TRY TO CUT THE CITY OFF
FROM RICE-RICH DELTA BUT THIS HAS YET TO HAPPEN.

AID PERSONNEL ARE PRESENTLY MAKING ASSISMENTS AND VOLAGS
OPERATING. MAJOR VOLAG PROBLEM IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE DESIRE TO
REDUCE AMERICANS IN COUNTRY WHILE CARRYING ON EXPANDED RESPON-
SIBILITIES. AMERICAN REFUGEE OFFICERS HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH
UNDP, UNICEF AND THE UN HIGH COMMISSION ON REFUGEES PROVIDING
INFORMATION AND STATISTICS ON THE SIZE OF THE PROBLEM IN ENEMY-
HELD REGIONS. NO FOOD OR MATERIAL HAS BEEN REQUESTED AND NONE
HAS BEEN OFFERED. THERE MAY BE AS MANY AS ONE MILLION REFUGEES
ON THE OTHER SIDE.

2. THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ARE IN RESPONSE TO PAT HOLT'S
QUERIES CONTAINED IN REF B.

A. EVACUATION ON AMERICANS AND OTHER FOREIGNERS: EMBASSY
IS PURSUING A LIMITED PROGRAM OF REDUCING NUMBER OF AMERICAN
DEPENDENTS AND DEFENSE AND AID EMPLOYEES AND CONTRACTORS.
THUS FAR NET REDUCTION AMOUNTS TO ABOUT 500, LEAVING SOME 5400
AMERICANS, BOTH GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE AND DEPENDENTS.

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EMBASSY MAKING CONSIDERABLE EFFORT TO AVOID APPEARANCE OF EVACUATION AND INDEED IS DENYING THAT EVACUATION IS TAKING PLACE. SITUATION PRESENTS MAJOR DILEMMA: HOW TO REDUCE NUMBER OF THOSE WHO MIGHT HAVE TO BE MOVED WITHOUT TRIGGERING REACTION WHICH COULD COMPEL TOTAL EVACUATION OR, EVEN WORSE, WHICH MIGHT MAKE EVACUATION IMPOSSIBLE.

C, EMBASSY'S CAUTIOUS APPROACH TO REDUCING PERSONNEL IS SUBJECT OF SOME CONTROVERSY AND DISSENTION. ALTHOUGH THERE IS GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TRICKY NATURE OF PROBLEM, QUITE A FEW AMERICANS BELIEVE EMBASSY SHOULD BE MOVING MORE RAPIDLY. THEY ARGUE THAT EMBASSY IS, IN EFFECT, PLACING LIVES OF AMERICANS AND U.S.-ASSOCIATED VIETNAMESE IN JEOPARDY IN ORDER TO SHORE UP GOVERNMENT. SENIOR EMBASSY OFFICIALS, ON OTHER HAND, ARE CRITICAL OF WHAT THEY REFER TO AS "PANIC" IN SOME QUARTERS. EMBASSY OFFICIALS ACKNOWLEDGE THEY WOULD LIKE TO MOVE MORE RAPIDLY BUT ARE CONSTRAINED BY FEAR OF LOCAL REACTION. TO CONSIDERABLE EXTENT, DIFFERING VIEWS ON URGENCY OF NEED TO MOVE ON EVACUATION TURN ON ESTIMATES OF SERIOUSNESS OF SECURITY SITUATION. SENIOR OFFICIALS ARE THE LEAST PESSIMISTIC. VIEWS ON URGENCY OF NEED TO BEGIN EVACUATION OF VIETNAMESE SEEM TO VARY WITH DEGREE OF PERSONAL CONTACT AND INVOLVEMENT.

D, WITHIN LAST FEW DAYS EMBASSY HAS ACCELERATED EVACUATION PLANNING PROCESS WITH PREPARATION OF LISTS OF VIETNAMESE WHO WOULD HAVE TO BE EVACUATED IF THE AMERICANS LEFT. THE EMBASSY'S PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF POTENTIAL VIETNAMESE EVACUEES INCLUDES 14,000 LOCAL EMPLOYEES AND 100-150,000 OF THEIR DEPENDENTS. TOTAL NUMBER POTENTIAL EVACUEES IS 173,719 BUT THIS FIGURE SUBJECT TO REVISION, PROBABLY UPWARD. INCLUDED ARE SOME 1300 THIRD-COUNTRY DIPLOMATIC MISSION PERSONNEL.

E, IT IS ASSUMED THAT VIETNAMESE WOULD BE TAKEN TO UNITED STATES. NO NEIGHBORING ASIAN COUNTRIES HAVE OFFERED TO ACCEPT THEM. VARIETY OF LEGAL PROBLEMS WOULD HAVE TO BE SORTED OUT AFTER ARRIVAL IN U.S. A RELATED PROBLEM CONCERNS DIFFICULTY BEING EXPERIENCED AT PRESENT BY VIETNAMESE WHO WISH TO LEAVE NOW BUT WHO ARE PREVENTED FROM DOING SO BY DIFFICULTY OF COMPLETING VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT FORMALITIES. WE ARE TOLD THAT GOING PRICE OF EXIST VISA IS US\$100,000.

3, RESETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES:

GREAT BULK OF REFUGEES WHO CAN BE REACHED HAVE NOW BEEN MOVED AS INDICATED IN ANSWERS TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR

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HUMPHREY. ALTHOUGH LIVING PLANS NOT YET MADE, EXPECTATION IS THAT REFUGEES WOULD BE RESETTLED NEAR PRESENT LOCATIONS. AS USUAL, AVAILABILITY OF SUITABLE LOCATIONS DEPENDS UPON SECURITY CONDITIONS WHICH ARE WORSE NOW THEN EVER.

4, USE OF AMERICAN ARMED FORCES: WE HAVE NOTHING NEW ON THIS SUBJECT.

5, HUMANITARIAN NEEDS GENERALLY: COVERED ABOVE (PARA 1C) IN RESPONSE TO SENATOR HUMPHREY'S QUESTIONS. THERE MAY BE SOME ADDITIONAL SPECIALIZED REQUIREMENTS, PARTICULARLY IN THE MEDICAL FIELD, BUT WE HAVE NOT GOTTEN INTO THESE YET.

6, STAFFDEL TRAVEL PLANS: WE PLAN TO LEAVE HERE ON FRIDAY, LAY OVER TWO DAYS EN ROUTE TO PREPARE FULL REPORT, AND RETURN TO WASHINGTON SOMETIME MONDAY, APRIL 14. PLEASE ADVISE IF THIS NOT SOON ENOUGH. MARTIN